



Arizona Department of Child Safety

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor

Gregory McKay
Director

July 10, 2015

The Honorable Douglas A. Ducey
Governor
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

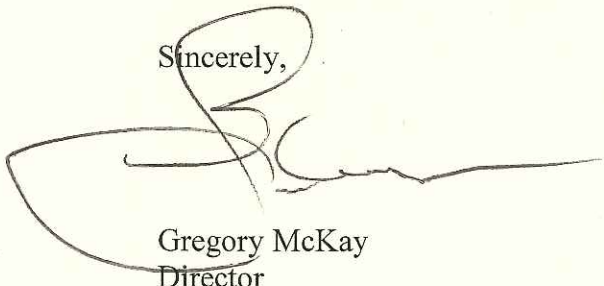
RE: Tribal Consultation Annual Report

Dear Director FireThunder:

Pursuant to Executive Order 2006-14, Consultation and Cooperation with Arizona Tribes, the Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) respectfully submits the DCS Annual Tribal Consultation Report for the period covering July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015

I am pleased to provide you with the Department's efforts to enhance communications with Indian tribes and nations during SFY 2015.

Sincerely,



Gregory McKay
Director

cc: President Andy Biggs, Arizona State Senate
Speaker David M. Gowan Sr., Arizona State House of Representatives
Members of the Joint Legislative Audit Committee
Kristine FireThunder, Executive Director, Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs
Joan Clark, State Librarian, Arizona State Library, Archives, and Public Records



Agency Overview

The Arizona Department of Child Safety (the Department or DCS) is the single state administered child welfare services agency for Arizona with an overarching goal to protect children. On February 17, 2015, Governor Douglas A. Ducey appointed Gregory McKay as the new Director of DCS. The Department established a mission to successfully engage children and families while ensuring safety, strengthening families, and achieving timely permanency.

Tribal Liaison

The Department created a Tribal Liaison position in 2014 in accordance with Executive Order 2006-14. The Tribal Liaison is responsible for facilitating state-tribal consultation, for the 22 Arizona tribes, and is tasked with developing, maintaining, and improving communication between DCS and the tribes of Arizona. Sharon James-Tiger was hired as the DCS Tribal Liaison on February 17, 2015.

Tribal Government Consultation Policy

The Department is committed to working with American Indian Tribes to improve the quality, availability, and accessibility of human services to children, youth, and adults. The establishment of the Tribal Government Consultation Policy ensures that DCS engages in open, continuous, and meaningful consultation with the 22 Arizona Tribal Nations. Through the consultation process, a forum for information exchange and mutual understanding is created. DCS Tribal Liaison is collaborating with the Tribes to establish the Policy.

Tribal Consultation Activities

The Department continues to honor tribal sovereignty and collaborate with the 22 Tribes of Arizona regarding child welfare programs, policies, and new regulations. The communications are through a variety of mechanisms including the Tribal Consultation Sessions, Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGA), Contracts, and quarterly meetings with the Tribes. The Department has 15 contracts or IGAs with tribes. There are seven contracts for Family Support (FS), Family Preservation (FP), and Family Reunification Services (FRS), four contracts for Specialized Substance Abuse Treatment services, one contract for Comprehensive Service Development, one Title IV-E IGA, one ICWA IGA, and one Consultation contract with the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona (ITC-A).

The Department held three formal consultation sessions with the Tribes in this reporting period in December 2014, February 2015, and June 2015. DCS engaged in several collaborative activities with the Tribes. Several of those activities are described in the following table.

Goal	Objective	Activity and Performance Measure
Establish effective communication channels to build meaningful relationships with Tribes.	Introduce new DCS leadership and Tribal Liaison staff.	February 26, 2015 - DCS/Tribal Government Consultation Session - DCS participated in a round table discussion regarding child welfare.
Address issues affecting Tribes in Arizona.	Design a foster care recruitment plan for American Indian foster homes.	March 26, 2015 – The DCS/Urban Indian Coalition Child Welfare Subcommittee had monthly meetings to encourage the transfer of knowledge and develop a plan for training and foster home recruitment. A point of communication was established and there was increased collaboration with tribal agencies.
	Build state/tribal relationships.	March 31, 2015 – To build relationships and improve collaboration, the DCS/Gila River meeting was held between the Tribal Leadership and the DCS Director.
	Introduce new DCS leadership and Tribal Liaison staff.	April 3, 2015 – To improve collaboration between Tribal Liaisons and strengthen relationships between agencies and tribes, the DCS/First Things First (FTF) Tribal Regional Directors meeting was held. At this meeting, the DCS staff did a presentation. Then the DCS Tribal Liaison presented a paper about the Indian Child Welfare Act to Regional Tribal Liaisons of FTF.
Build meaningful relationships with Tribes.	Establish point of contact and engage in discussions to improve relationships.	April 6, 2015 – At the DCS/Ft. McDowell Yavapai Apache meeting, the tribe provided a history and cultural information. The tribe requested to meet local office case managers and social workers in effort to encourage a cultural exchange and increase communication between DCS and the Tribe.
	Engage in open, continuous, and relevant consultation regarding the Navajo Nation IGA.	April 8, 2015 – At the DCS/Navajo Nation Quarterly meeting, dialogue was continued.
	Establish effective communication channels and build state/tribal relationships.	April 16, 2015 - At the DCS/Hopi Tribe meeting, a Tribal IGA for ICWA implementation was established.
Address issues affecting Tribes in Arizona.	Build state/tribal relationships.	April 17, 2015 - DCS/AIOHC/ITC/CMDP met to ensure that tribal youth aging out of the child welfare systems have no lapse in health insurance coverage.
Establish and cultivate working relationships with key persons in tribal governments.	Provide point of contact to increase communication and resolve issues.	April 29, 2015 – The DCS/Gila River meeting was held where the DCS Tribal Liaison met with Gila River Tribal Social Services staff. The purpose of this meeting was to provide resources and contacts within the department.

Goal	Objective	Activity and Performance Measure
Maintain open dialogue with Tribes.	Provide an opportunity for American Indian Tribes to submit written comments during any period of ongoing consultation	April 30, 2015 – At the DCS/Tribal Quarterly ICWA meeting, DCS presented Review Summary Bureau of Indian Affairs ICWA Guidelines, Policy Impact Review and Child and Family Services.
Build meaningful relationships with Tribes.	Provide an opportunity for American Indian Tribes to submit written comments during any period of ongoing consultation.	May 4, 2015 – Through DCS/Tribal Outreach, DCS corresponded with the Tribal Leadership and Social Services Directors to seek feedback regarding DCS Tribal Consultation Policy and new Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Child Welfare Act.
	Provide a point of contact to increase communication, and resolve issues.	May 6, 2015 – At the DCS/Ft. McDowell meeting, DCS and the Ft. McDowell Yavapai Apache Tribe met to increase communication and collaborate about services.
	Provide a point of contact to increase communication, and resolve issues.	May 22, 2015 – At the DCS/Quechan meeting, DCS and the Quechan Tribe met to increase communication and collaborate on services.
	Introduce DCS Tribal Liaison and establish a point of contact.	June 11, 2015 – At the DCS/ITC-A meeting, the DCS Tribal Liaison was introduced to Tribal Social Services Directors.
	Engage continuous and relevant consultation regarding the Navajo Nation IGA.	June 12, 2015 – At the DCS/Navajo Nation meeting, DCS and the Navajo nation met to increase communication and collaborate on services. DCS Tribal Liaison facilitated the quarterly meeting, and DCS Independent Living Program conducted outreach to the Tribal staff.
Formal consultation session.	Discuss potential changes to policy that will have a significant impact on Tribes.	June 19, 2015 – At the DCS/Tribal Government Consultation, DCS provided an overview of the Department. Seventeen Tribal representatives and 28 attendees participated in a round table discussion regarding child welfare.

Major Accomplishment(s)

The Department works closely with the Tribes to increase compliance with ICWA and provide ICWA training to state and tribal social workers. The Department has a new specialized ICWA Unit located in Phoenix to increase workforce capacity in the area of Indian Child Welfare.

The Department and the Navajo Nation have been engaged in extensive discussions to develop an IGA for coordinating child welfare cases under ICWA. The revised IGA was finalized in December 2014. The Department's Tribal Liaison continues to facilitate quarterly meetings with the Nation's Social Services Department to continue discussion regarding the means for improve outcomes for Navajo children. The quarterly meetings provide the opportunity for a transfer of knowledge and the development of immediate and short-term strategies to address mutually identified Indian Child Welfare challenges. The Navajo Nation IGA will serve as a model for establishing agreements with other Tribes within the state of Arizona.

For questions or more information, please contact Sharon James-Tiger, DCS Tribal Liaison, at (602) 255-2662 or by email at SJames-Tiger@azdes.gov.